



WE Include & Best Buddies

by Assemblyman Nathan Fletcher

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In my campaign for the State Assembly, we made a promise to the Director of San Diego's Partnerships With Industry that if elected, our office would employ an individual with a developmental disability.

We kept that promise and are proud to take part in First Lady Maria Shriver's WE Include Program, which focuses on opening doors to employment for individuals with developmental disabilities

In April of 2009, Jay Bariuan joined our team. He came via a referral from Partnerships With Industry—an organization that pairs developmentally disabled adults with good jobs in the San Diego area.

Jay's optimistic attitude, willingness to learn and past experience as a file clerk made him a perfect match for the fast-paced, service-centered environment in our office.

Jay is critical to this work and to helping us run our day-to-day operations.

On any given day, Jay helps sort and route the office mail, answers telephones, counts Chelsea 's Law support petitions and assists with setup and hosting duties at our Community Town Halls. Recently, Jay even helped manage the crowd during a packed news conference.

Jay's growth and success is wonderful to see, but even more so is the pride he takes in his job. Jay was eager to help us draft this entry. We set up a time to talk with him about it, and when we asked him how he felt about sharing his story with people across California , he was thrilled. Just a little later he said, "I told the people that I know that I'm in this article."

Jay also tells his friends about what he does in our office and that he wants to work with us for a long time. That's great to hear, and exactly what we hope for, too.

The wonderful opportunity we've had the past fourteen months to work alongside Jay has cemented our commitment to partnering with developmentally disabled adults.

[This Wednesday](#), we look forward to joining California 's First Lady Maria Shriver and other members of TEAM MARIA in Sacramento to celebrate this commitment and to raise support and awareness for Best Buddies International.

Best Buddies is a non-profit organization dedicated to creating opportunities for one-to-one friendships, integrated employment and leadership development for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

The First Lady and her team will participate in the 11th Audi best Buddies Challenge: Hearst Castle later this summer. This annual fundraising event is one of Best Buddies International's biggest support-generators.

Assemblyman Nathan Fletcher and his office applaud the work of the First Lady and Best Buddies International. To find out more about Best Buddies, visit www.bestbuddies.org.

<http://www.flashreport.org/blog.php?authID=2009010418353988>